

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A composition for preventing or treating epithelial tissue damage comprising a substance that prevents or treats epithelial tissue damage associated with the expression of glucosylceramide synthase, comprising:

a-an RNA polynucleotide antisense to a sequence comprising the glucosylceramide synthase mRNA.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The substance according to claim 1, further comprising a cell containing the polynucleotide and a lower amount of the CD_{1d} gene translation product than in similar cells lacking the polynucleotide.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The substance according to claim 1, wherein the polynucleotide is an RNAi oligonucleotide.

Claim 4-5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (currently amended): A composition for preventing or treating epithelial tissue damage associated with the expression of glucosylceramide synthase comprising, a substance that prevents or treats epithelial tissue damage, comprising:

a-an RNA polynucleotide antisense to a sequence comprised by the glucosylceramide synthase mRNA in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 6, wherein the polynucleotide is an RNAi oligonucleotide.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The composition of claim 6, further comprising a cell containing the polynucleotide and a lower amount of the CD_{1d} gene translation product than in similar cells lacking the polynucleotide.

Claim 9-32 (canceled).